

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 6 and 8-14 are pending. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended.

Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

At the outset, Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended by Examiner Burch during a telephone conference held on May 4, 2011. The substance of the interview is discussed below.

Applicants further appreciate the indication (paragraph 5 of the office action) that the claims would be allowable subject to overcoming two 112 rejections (discussed below). As the only amendment relates to a suggestion made by the examiner to overcome one of the rejections (112, second), and no amendments are necessary to overcome the other rejection (112, first), applicants respectfully submit that the current amendment should be entered as matter of right and also places the application in condition for allowance. If the examiner does not agree to allow the application, then it would appear appropriate for the examiner to issue a new non-final rejection since neither of the current rejections applies to the current claim set, there being no amendments that raise new issues that require reconsideration.

Claims 1, 6 and 8-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first and/or second paragraphs. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to address the §112, second paragraph, antecedent issues in a manner consistent with the apparent suggestion made by the Examiner in paragraph 4 of the office action. During the interview, the examiner indicated this amendment would be entered.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection under the first paragraph of 112. In particular, the examiner takes the position that the weight is held in the vertical direction V the springs as well as a wall portion 23, as shown in Figures 2 and 5. However, the springs support

the weight, and the walls 21, 22, 23 and 24 (which form the frame body 3) support the springs, such that the claims are supported in the specification.

During the interview, the examiner explained that Figure 2 appears to show the wall portion 23 being “above” the weight, and therefore interpreted the wall portion 23 as having a “roof” or “cover” portion. However, as is clear from Figure 1, the wall portion is clearly spaced from the weight by springs 6. Specifically, while the wall portion 23 is visible in Figure 2, the wall portion 23 is still spaced from the wall portion as shown in Figure 23. Moreover, it is clear that no portion of wall portion 23 in Figure 2 is shown with cross hatching, this being a strong indication that wall portion 23 has no part that lies in a plane above the weight in a way that would preclude its vertical movement. By contrast, the wall portions 21 and 22 in Figure 2 include cross hatching that indicates a regular rectangular thickness, with no cover portions, etc.

The examiner is also encouraged to review the specification, e.g., page 11, lines 14-16, which specify that “... the weight 2 is held by the leaf springs 4, 5, 6 and 7 movably in all directions in the horizontal plane and immovably in the vertical direction V, respectively”. As explained during the interview, the shape of the springs as shown in the drawings, particularly in relation to Figure 4, is such that the spring may flex about the U-shaped portion 41 in the horizontal plane, and at the same time the springs guard against movement in the vertical plane. See also page 12, lines 6-7 (“... the leaf springs 4, 5, 6 and 7 are practically not deflected in the vertical direction V.”) This can be easily demonstrated by bending a piece of paper as shown in Figure 4 and standing it upright on a tabletop surface: the paper will allow flexing about the U-shaped portion (parallel to the tabletop surface) but will resist/prevent movement if a force is applied along a direction perpendicular to the tabletop.

Based on the above explanation, Applicants do not believe that any amendment is required to overcome the rejection under 112, first paragraph, given the original specification provides clear support for what is claimed. However, to clarify this point, Applicants would be willing to amend claim 1 to specify that the weight is held immovably in the vertical direction perpendicular to the plane with respect to said pair of X-direction vertical wall portions and said pair of Y- direction vertical wall portions of said frame body only by means of said leaf springs, and similarly amend claim 14 to specify that the weight is held immovably in the vertical direction perpendicular to the plane with respect to the frame body only by means of the springs. If the examiner believes these amendments are desirable, then the examiner is requested to contact the undersigned.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all the claims are patentable and that the entire application is in condition for allowance.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency, or credit any overpayment, in the fee(s) filed, or asserted to be filed, or which should have been filed herewith (or with any paper hereafter filed in this application by this firm) to our Account No. 14-1140 under Order No. PTB-1207-131.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable to place the application in better condition for allowance, she is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.

By: /Paul T. Bowen/

Reg. No. 38,009

PTB:jck
901 North Glebe Road, 11th Floor
Arlington, VA 22203-1808
Telephone: (703) 816-4000
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100